

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/661,518

Applicant(s)

COTE ET AL.

Examiner

Fred Prince

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to December 22, 2003.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-29.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 15 September 2003 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 09/799,524.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date 1203
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☐ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

Fred G. Prince
FRED G. PRINCE
PRIMARY EXAMINER

2/17/04

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Scott Pundsack on February 17, 2004.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the specification, page 1, line 2, --now US Pat No 6,645,374-- has been inserted after "2003,".

On page 1, line 3, --now US Pat No 6,558,549-- has been inserted after "2001,".

On page 1, line 8, --and-- has been inserted prior to "60/189,498".

On page 1, lines 8-10, "and Canadian Application Nos. 2,300,209 and 2,300,719" has been deleted.

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

While it is known in the art to provide a flexible element with an inner space for gas flow and a gas permeable but liquid water impermeable membrane with one or more conduits to transfer gas from the inner space to the atmosphere (see US Pat No 5,116,506 to Williamson et al.), and it is known in the art to make an element planar in shape (see US Pat No 5,482,859 to Biller et al.), in the examiner's opinion, the prior art fails to teach or fairly suggest the apparatus further comprising restraining members

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having the recited positioning and operational elements or a weight to keep the members hanging vertically downwards.

While it is known in the art to provide an apparatus with a spacer and membrane forming an element with an inner space for gas flow, an inlet conduit and an outlet conduit (see Williamson et al.) and it is known to provide a planar element (see Biller et al.), in the examiner's opinion, the prior art fails to teach or fairly suggest the inlet and outlet conduits being placed on opposed sides of the planar element and extending along the sides of the element or a plurality of planar elements in communication with a first gas in a manifold.

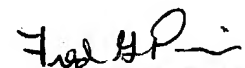
Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Fred Prince whose telephone number is (571) 272-1165. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, 6:30-4:00; alt. Fridays 6:30-3:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Blaine R. Copenheaver can be reached on (571) 272-1156. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


FRED G. PRINCE
PRIMARY EXAMINER
2/17/04